

NEWS RELEASE

u.s. department of the interior

REC-11  
APR 19 1994

# NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Preservation Services

For Release: April 20, 1994

Anita Clevenger 202/208-7394

SECRETARY BABBITT DESIGNATES 31 NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS

BY

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OMAHA, Neb.--Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt today

announced the designation of 31 properties as National Historic Landmarks. These include a church, hotel, academy, tunnels, a missile and radar site, historic district, a tenement building, an orchestra hall, fishing boats, a park, battlefield and expedition and archeological sites.

The newly-designated properties are in the States of Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Tennessee and West Virginia.

"These nationally significant historic properties illustrate the fine preservation work that is being conducted through the initiative of State and local governments and private citizens," Secretary Babbitt said.

Landmarks are identified by theme and special studies prepared or overseen by National Park Service historians and archaeologists. It is the Federal Government official recognition of the national importance of historic properties.

-MORE-

**ORCHESTRA HALL  
CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra was one of the great institutions of the extraordinary cultural flowering of Chicago following the fire of 1871. Orchestra Hall has been the orchestra's home since its construction in 1904-05, as designed by one of the Nation's major architects, Daniel Burnham. Conductors Theodore Thomas and Frederick August Stock, Directors from 1891 until 1942, were great popularizers of orchestral music whose performances and activities made classical and symphonic music available to a far broader spectrum of the American population than previously. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra's tradition of excellence was continued more recently by Fritz Reiner and George Solti, both of whom made the orchestra a world-class institution.

**NEW ENGLAND CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC  
BOSTON, SUFFOLK COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS**

Throughout its 126-year history, the New England Conservatory of Music has been regarded as a leading institution in the field of music education, having set the standards for the teaching of music, graduating a corps of music teachers, and establishing academic credit for musical study. The conservatory's Jordan Hall has long been regarded as one of the world's top concert halls for its exceptional acoustics. The current building housing the conservatory was constructed in 1903, the legacy of Eben Tourjée, whose conservatory method worked to enhance musical understanding in the public schools and whose reputation survives today even in Japanese singing instruction. The conservatory is also significant for George Whitefield Chadwick, its director for 33 years, who, more than any other composer of his generation, influenced the progress of American music deep into the the twentieth century.

**AUSTIN (A. EVERETT) HOUSE  
HARTFORD, HARTFORD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT**

The Austin House is an architectural embodiment of A. Everett Austin, Jr.'s achievements as an impresario of the arts in America. The drama and avant-garde thrust that Austin brought to his work as an innovative museum director of the Wadsworth Atheneum, from 1927 to 1944, are fully expressed in his house. Behind a facade that revives Scamozzi, the Renaissance architect, the house combines the disparate Baroque and International styles, both of which he championed at the museum. The social activities in this house brought together an international group of pioneering figures in the arts, attracted to Hartford by Austin's revolutionary exhibitions and programs at the Atheneum.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Theodore Thomas Orchestra Hall

AND/OR COMMON

Orchestra Hall

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

220 South Michigan Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

VICINITY OF  
CODE

STATE

Illinois

COUNTY  
CODE  
Cook

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

### PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Orchestral Association

STREET & NUMBER

220 South Michigan Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Chicago,

VICINITY OF

STATE

Illinois

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cook County Building

STREET & NUMBER

Clark and Randolph Streets

CITY, TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

## 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Illinois Historic Structures Survey

DATE

1972

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Of Illinois, Department of Conservation

CITY, TOWN

Springfield,

STATE  
Illinois

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Orchestra Hall contains an auditorium seating 2566 on the ground floor and on three upper levels. The lowest of these is a string of boxes entered directly from a vestibule on the second level. Above is a balcony, above that is a gallery set well behind the balcony. The upper balcony area with the gallery level have a separate lobby area for promenades during the intermission, while the lower balcony area and boxes use the ballroom for this purpose.

The hall spreads back fan-like from a stage that thrusts outward slightly. The graceful curve of the stage's back complements the graceful curves of the rows of seating and of the box and balcony fronts. No proscenium separates the hall from the stage. Instead, a series of arches that follow up the walls and across the ceiling as it moves forward and downward from the highest reaches of the gallery draw the hall and stage together. Much narrower arches radiate out from a central point in the ceiling above the front of the stage, seemingly enclosing the orchestra within a great shell niche.

The decoration of the hall is extremely chaste, limited to Georgian or Adamesque wreaths and mouldings in the hall and to three great arched openings housing the organ pipes at the back of the stage.

The only other important space within the original building is the ballroom. It is in a two-story high space at the front of the foyer, the position occupied by this element in the classic European opera house developed during the eighteenth century.

In the basement and stage areas are a rehearsal and locker room and other utilitarian spaces, while on the seventh and eighth floors, but only on the Michigan Avenue facade, are offices used by the management of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The facade is in a simple Georgian or, as it was more generally known at the time, Colonial Style. Three major portals stand below the three great arched windows that light the ballroom. Above this is a frieze with the names of five composers--Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Wagner. The next four floors have simple double hung windows whose lower light is a single pane and the upper one has a two-by-four pattern of small panes.

The top floor of the original facade acts as an entablature for the entire building. Its double hung windows, with a size that is a little bit lower than that of their mates below, are placed in the frieze level. Below, a string course acts as an architrave. Above is a projecting cornice topped by a balustrade.

The facade's materials help accentuate the classical tripartite division of the facade. The ground floor is limestone, while the ballroom level has limestone quoins, window surrounds, and arch spandrels; brick appears only next to and above the pedimented window that stands at each end of the facade. On the central four-story brick portion, limestone appears only in the quoins and flat arches of the windows. The top floor is limestone with brick only in the spaces between the windows.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1904 (original hall) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Daniel H. Burnham and Co.  
 1907-08 (Club addition) Howard Van Doren Shaw

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Orchestra Hall is significant in music as the only home the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has ever had, a home that contains the two primary requisites of an orchestral hall, a pleasant setting in which performers and audience can come together, and good accoustics that assure that all can hear well.

The orchestra, founded in 1891 by Theodore Thomas, had poor morale and mounting deficits when it played to less than capacity audiences and helped to support the expenses of its first performance hall, the Auditorium of Adler and Sullivan. In 1902 a group of philanthropists and civic leaders, that included Bryan Lathrop and Daniel Burnham, purchased a site on Michigan Avenue near the Art Institute and initiated a fund raising drive to build a new hall for the symphony and, secondarily, for public meetings. In 1904 they had the money and the orchestra had its hall.

During this period Theodore Thomas had been under extensive criticism from the press, and he knew that, coupled with luke warm public support, the pressure could bring down the new orchestra. Four previous efforts to establish a Chicago symphony orchestra had failed since 1850. The drive to build the hall, which Thomas had advocated since 1896, and the quick success of that effort once undertaken, persuaded Thomas not to leave Chicago.

The strenuous activities connected with the opening of the hall on December 14, 1904 overtaxed Thomas's health, and, already weakened by a bout of influenza, he died after conducting only five performances in the new hall. Frederick Stock moved from the viola section, to which Thomas had brought him, to the conductor's podium, where he presided for the next 37 years.

From its founding the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has been one of the nation's, and at times one of the world's, most important symphony orchestras.

When in the Auditorium, it competed for space with other events, musical and otherwise. It also lacked its own utilitarian areas, and it played to a hall that was seldom filled, so large is the Auditorium. In its own home it has spaces especially adapted for its use, it has first call on the hall, and it enjoys the luxury of being independent of an outside landlord. The hall is one of the most important financial assets of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It is a pleasant place for audiences to listen to the orchestra, and because it is a prominent

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	Illinois	
COUNTY	Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE

DESCRIPTION, page 2 (Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

Classical elements of chaste design frame the windows, top the building, and demarcate its zones, but otherwise, except for a swag at each end of the top floor's frieze level, the facade is quite restrained.

A single bay, which is really only a tier of brick framed windows, is set back slightly from the front facade at the south end. In it are utilitarian and circulation components.

The structure uses a steel frame advantageously, allowing the hall to be enclosed and its balconies, ceiling, and roof to be supported with only a few posts intruding into the hall in the upper balconies.

In 1907 facilities for the Cliff Dwellers Club were added on top of the front portion. The area directly behind the parapet became a dining terrace assuring that the addition would be only minimally visible from below. Parallel to it is a long room with a vaulted ceiling, with smaller rooms to the south and a kitchen, added in the 1920s, to the north. Its decoration, fittings, and furniture survive, as does the small oak writing desk used by one of the club's most famous members, Louis Sullivan.

In 1966 Harry Weese and Associates rehabilitated Orchestra Hall. New utilitarian elements were added throughout the building. New lighting was installed in some areas. The upper promenade area was rebuilt. But the hall, ballroom, and facade were renewed and left unchanged.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Illinois	
COUNTY	Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER		DATE

(Number all entries)

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (continued)

Landmarks Preservation Council and Service Inventory  
1974 local  
407 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks  
1976 local  
320 North Clark Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60610

8. Significance (continued)

Howard Van Doren Shaw (1869-1926) <sup>IS USUALLY</sup> associated with Prairie School designers, but his work usually stays close to English Tudor and cottage styles. His designs are primarily residential with some commercial work for the Donnelley printing companies (his Lakeside Press Building in Plymouth Court, 1897-1901, is listed on the National Register). The design for the Cliff Dwellers Club provides a comfortable space, its arts and crafts fittings and furniture survive substantially unaltered, demonstrating the continuity of outlook so characteristic of Chicagoans devoted to the arts, from the turn of the century to the present day.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thomas Hines, BURNHAM OF CHICAGO: ARCHITECT AND PLANNER, New York, 1974  
Stuart Cohen, et al. CHICAGO ARCHITECTS, Chicago, 1976  
Philo Adams Otis, THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, ITS ORGANIZATION,  
GROWTH, AND DEVELOPMENT, 1891-1924, Chicago, 1925.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A 


  
B 


C 


  
D 


VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Carroll William Westfall

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Preservation Council

DATE

May 6, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

407 South Dearborn Street

TELEPHONE

(312) 922-1742

CITY OR TOWN

Chicago

STATE

Illinois

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

ORCHESTRA HALL

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: ORCHESTRA HALL

Other Name/Site Number:

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 220 South Michigan Avenue

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Chicago

Vicinity: N/A

State: IL

County: Cook

Code: 031

Zip Code: 60604

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local: \_\_\_

Public-State: \_\_\_

Public-Federal: \_\_\_

Category of Property

Building(s): X

District: \_\_\_

Site: \_\_\_

Structure: \_\_\_

Object: \_\_\_

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

1

\_\_\_

\_\_\_

1

Noncontributing

\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_ objects

0 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 1

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

**ORCHESTRA HALL**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Commenting or Other Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal Agency and Bureau

**5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- \_\_\_ Entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**ORCHESTRA HALL**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Recreation & Culture Sub: Music Facility

Current: Recreation & Culture Sub: Music Facility

**7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals  
(Colonial Revival)

**MATERIALS:**

Foundation: Limestone

Walls: Brick, Limestone

Roof:

Other:

**ORCHESTRA HALL**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Page 4  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.****DESCRIPTION OF SITE:<sup>1</sup>**

Constructed in 1904-05 to the specifications of architect Daniel H. Burnham, Orchestra Hall consists of an auditorium seating 2600, a ballroom, and some office space. The facade fronts on Michigan Avenue and Lake Michigan in Chicago, and is of Georgian Revival design.

The ground floor has three major limestone portals leading to a vestibule containing ticket offices, to the west of which is the main lobby leading to the auditorium. The second floor exterior has three two-story arched windows surmounted by Georgian fanlights that light the second floor ballroom. On either side of this row of windows is a smaller window capped by a classical pediment. This level has limestone quoins, window surrounds, and arched spandrels. Above the second level, a projecting limestone band inscribed with the names of five composers (Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Wagner) separates the three-story base from the next four floors. These four floors have simple double hung windows whose lower lights are single paned and the upper ones have two-by-four patterns of small panes. This portion is all brick except for limestone quoins and flat window arches. Above these four floors is an elaborately treated limestone top floor which acts as an entablature for the entire building. Its double hung windows, smaller than their mates below, are placed at the frieze level, with brick only in the spaces between the windows. Below, a string course acts as an architrave. A classical cornice terminates the building and is surrounded by a limestone balustrade. To the south is a narrow section only one window wide, more simply treated than the rest of the facade.

The Michigan Avenue frontage of Orchestra Hall rises a full nine stories. Above the fourth floor, the building is only one office space deep to either side of a hall paralleling the street facade along Michigan Avenue. The auditorium space behind this "office tower" is only four stories high but extends back the entire depth of the lot.

The auditorium spreads back fan-like from a stage that thrusts outward slightly. The graceful curve of the stage's back complements the curves of the seating rows, balconies, and boxes. There are four levels of seating: the main level, a string of boxes entered from the second floor, a lower and upper balcony, and finally a gallery. There is no proscenium to separate the hall from the stage, rather a series of arches draw the stage and the hall together. The hall's decoration is simple, including Georgian wreaths and mouldings in the hall, and three great arched openings housing organ pipes at the back of the stage.

The second floor ballroom is a two-story space at the front of the building, facing Michigan Avenue. This room is used for receptions and small chamber concerts.

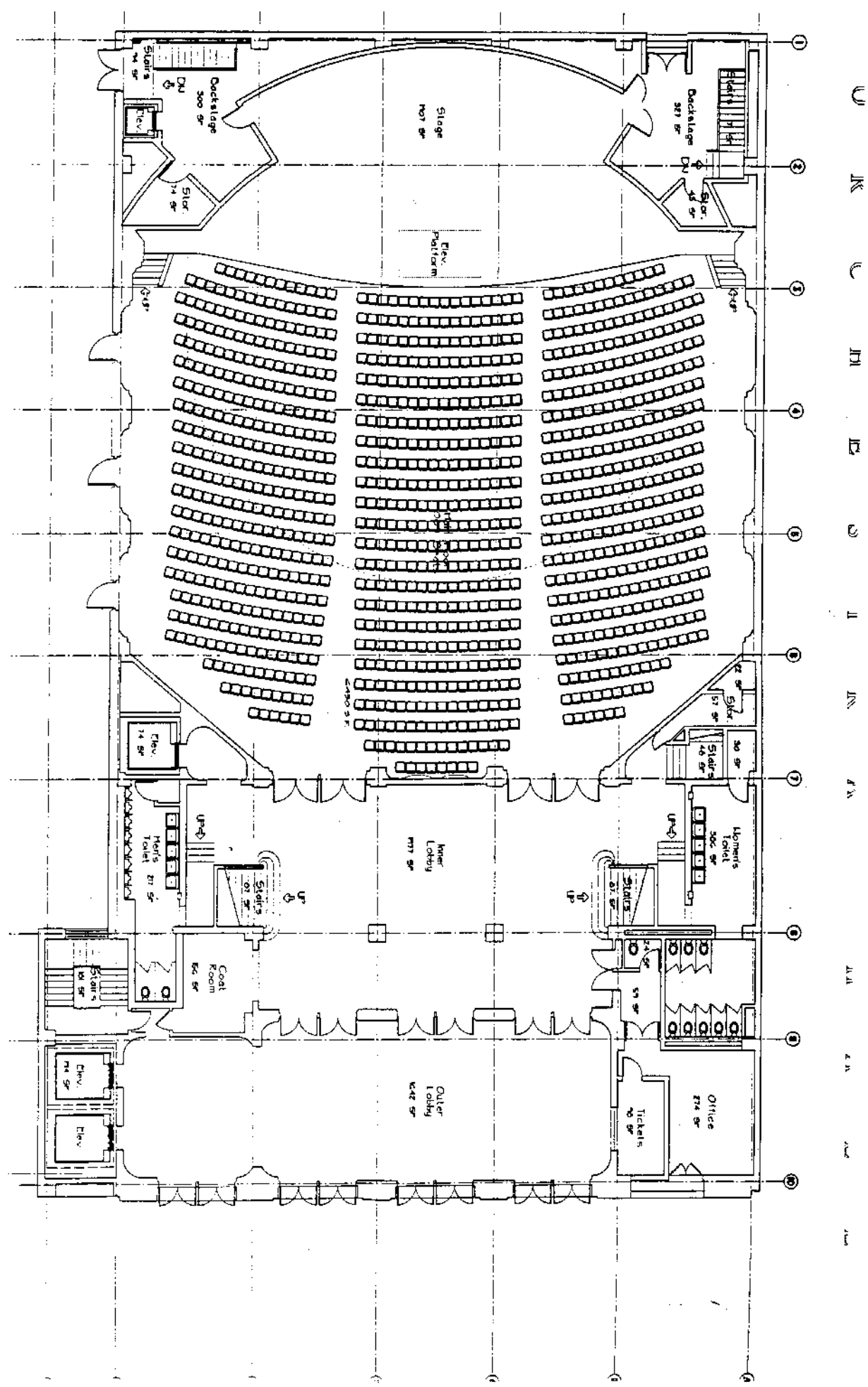
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<sup>1</sup> The information for this section draws on the following sources: "Orchestra Hall: A Chronicle of its Architecture and Acoustics," prepared for the Orchestral Association by the architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; Leo L. Beranek, *Music, Acoustics and Architecture* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1962), 117-22; "Orchestra Hall," preliminary summary of information prepared by the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, June 7, 1976; National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, prepared by Carroll William Westfall, Landmarks Preservation Council, Chicago, May 6, 1977.

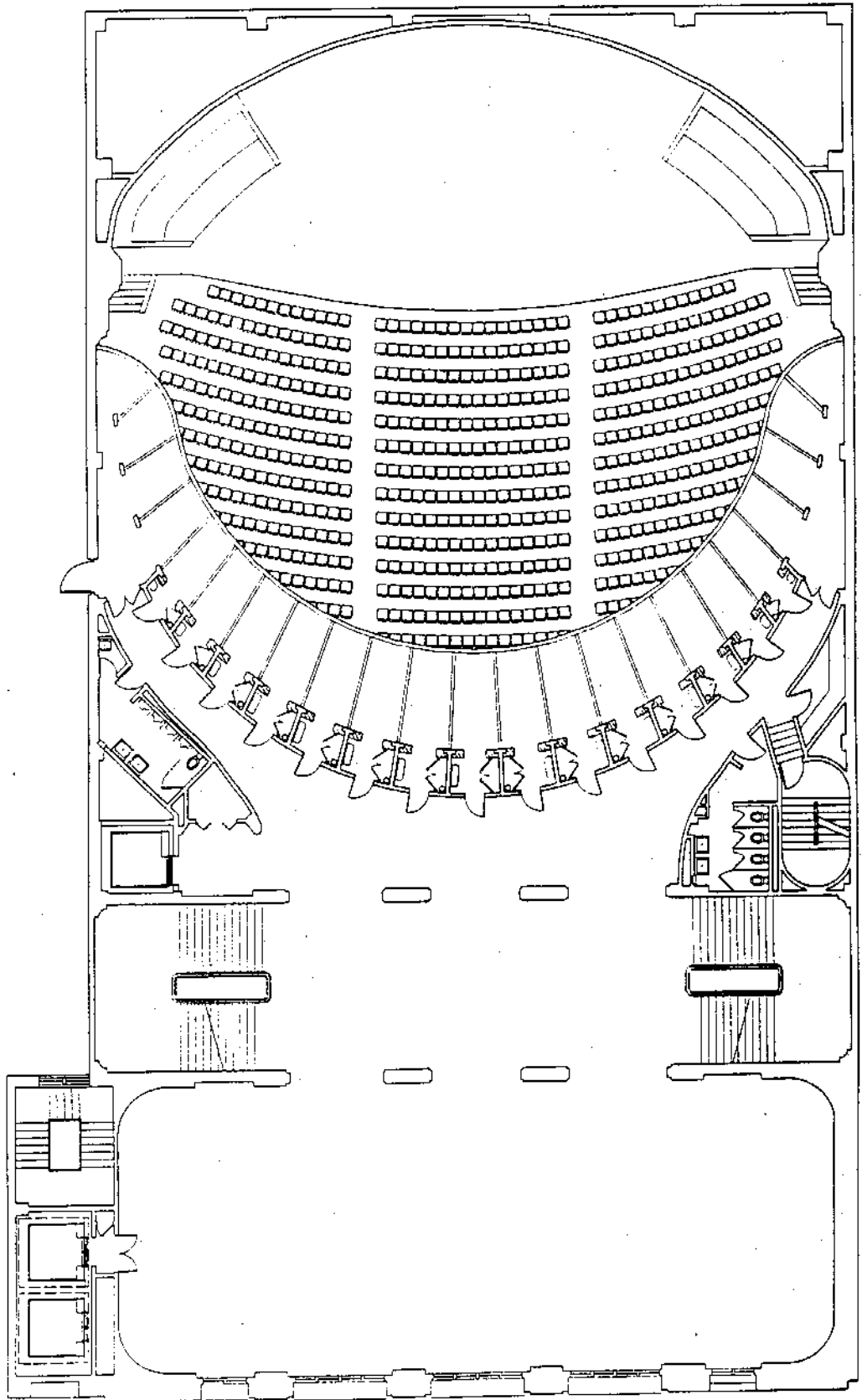




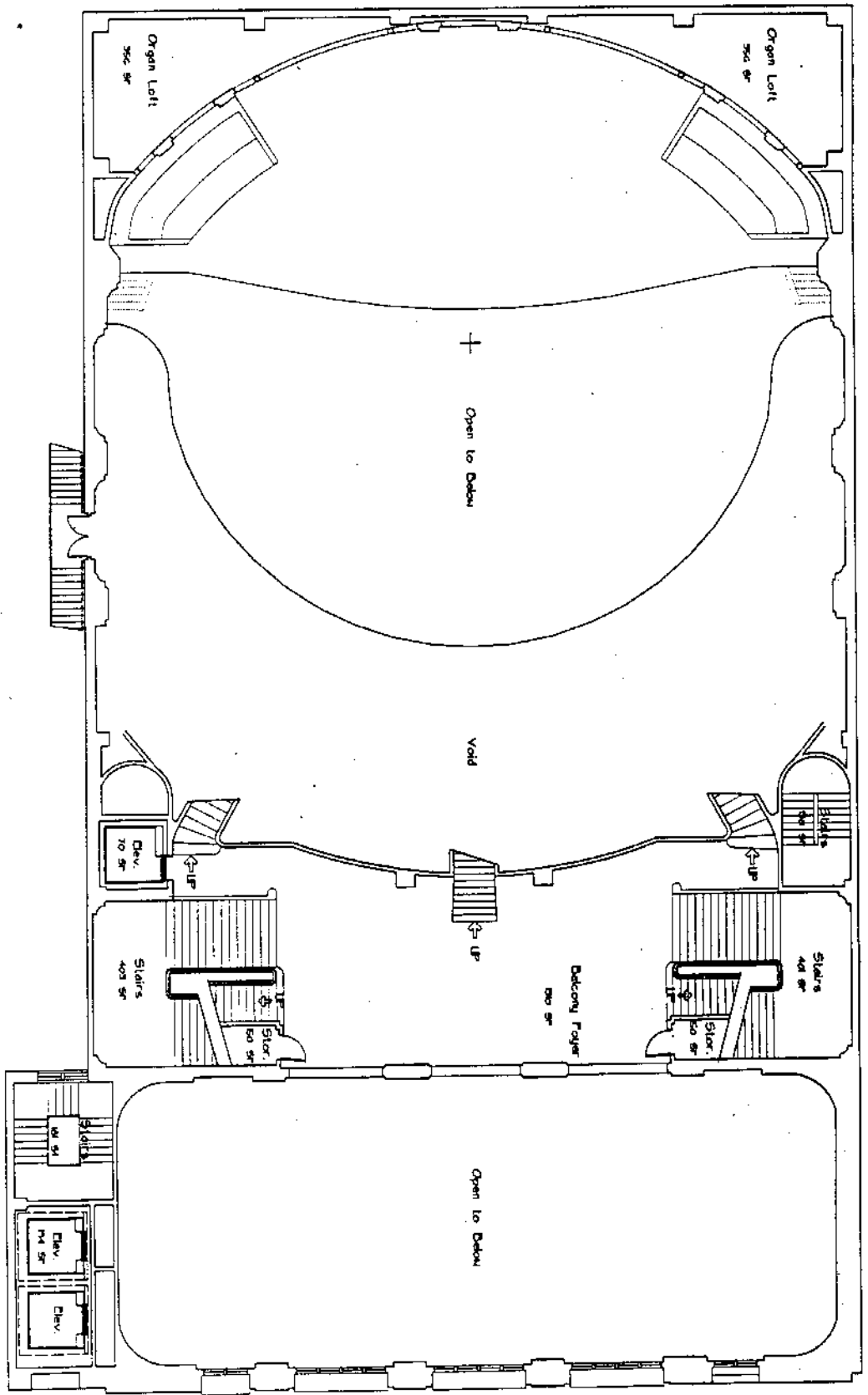
First Floor Plan



0 2 4 8 16  
SCALE

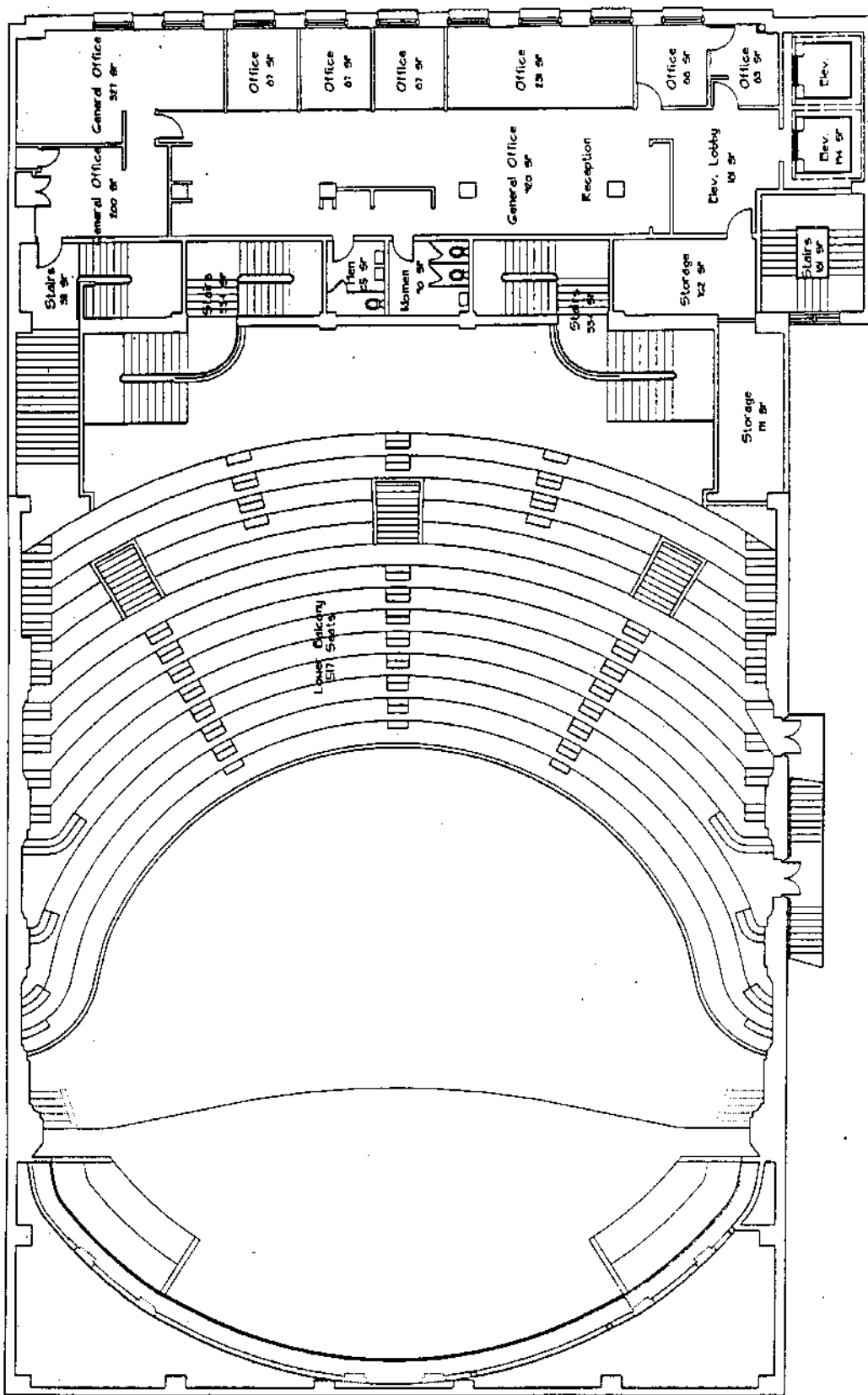


Second Floor Plan

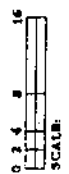


Third Floor Plan



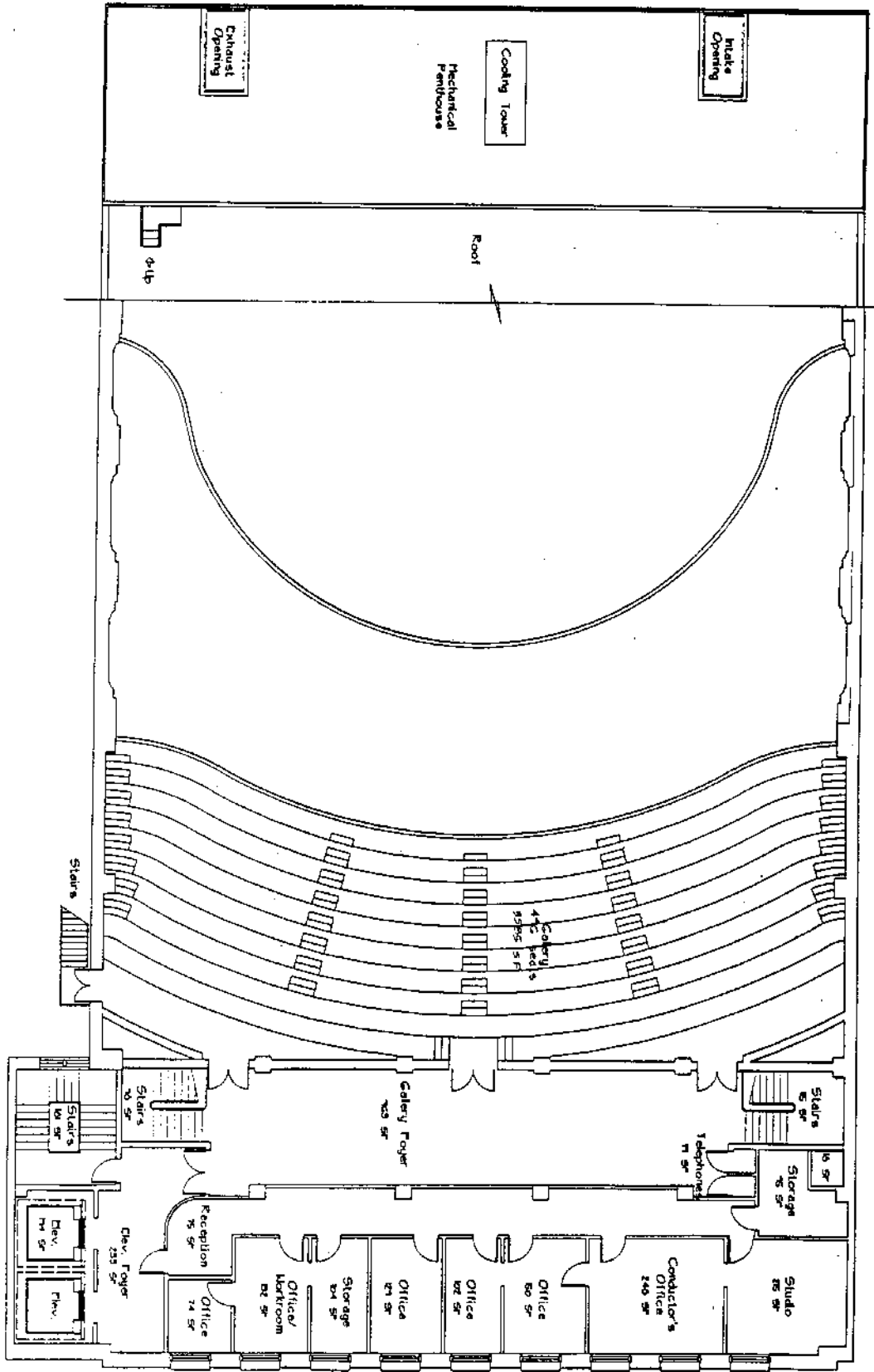


Fourth Floor Plan

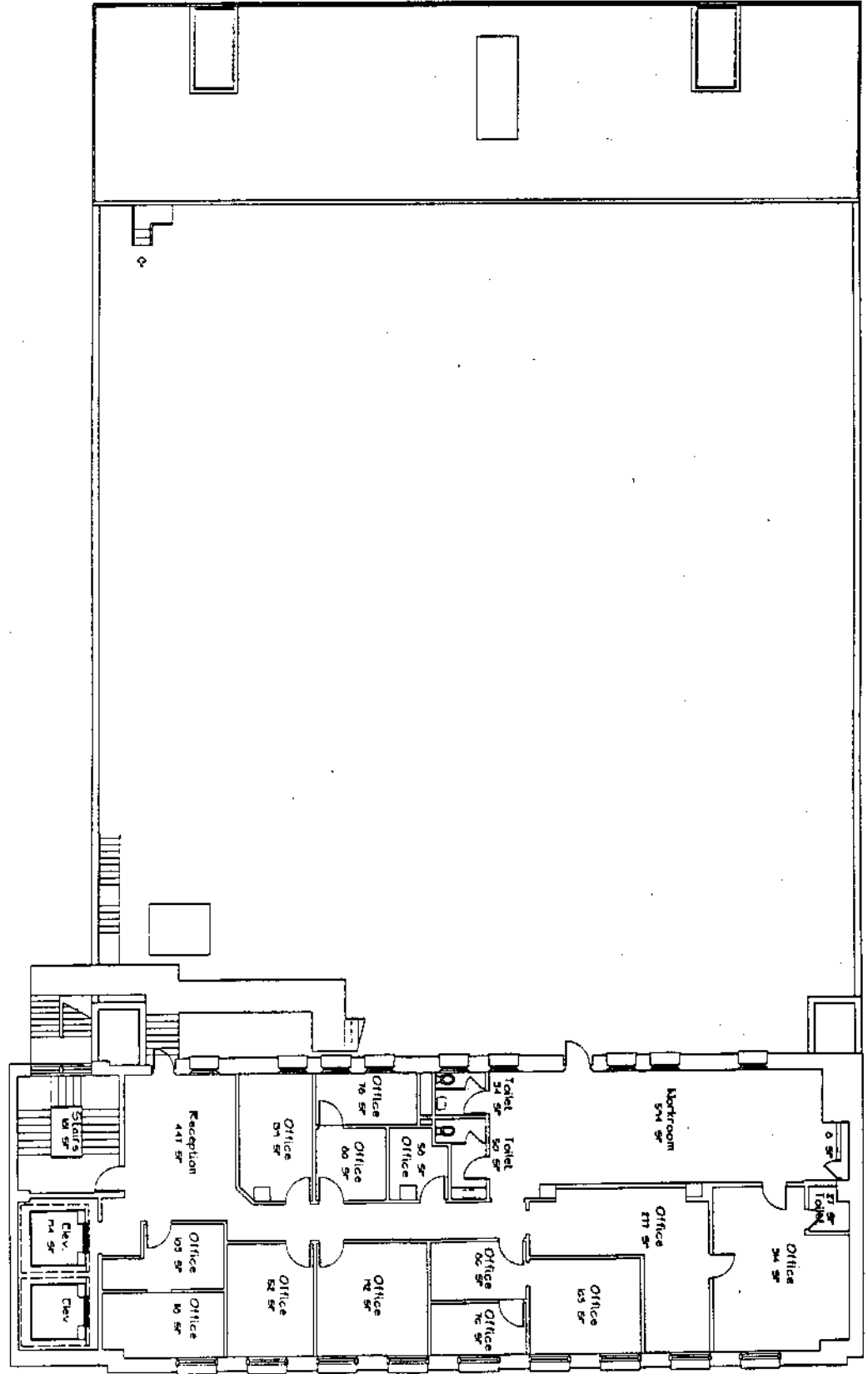




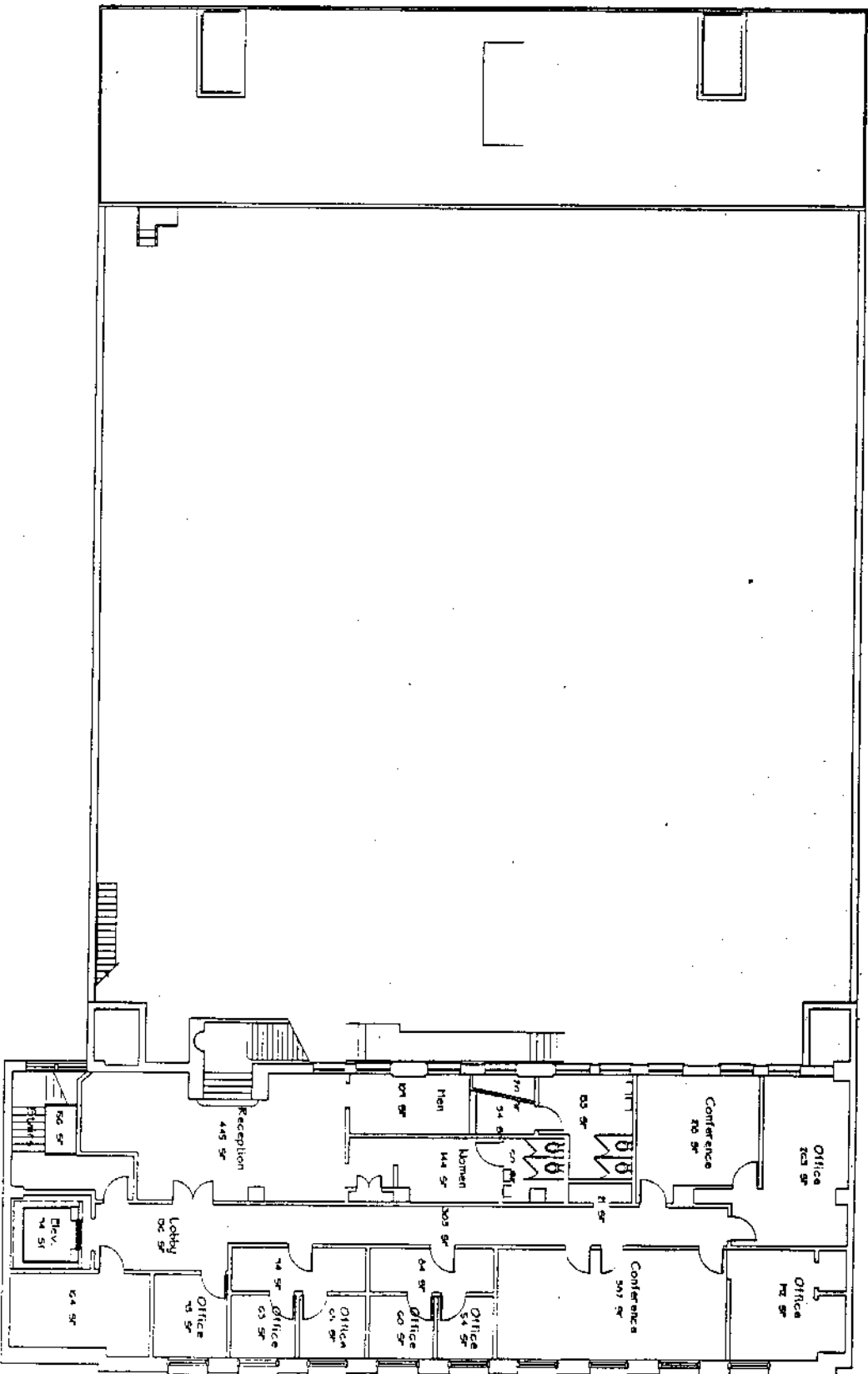
# Sixth Floor Plan



Seventh Floor Plan

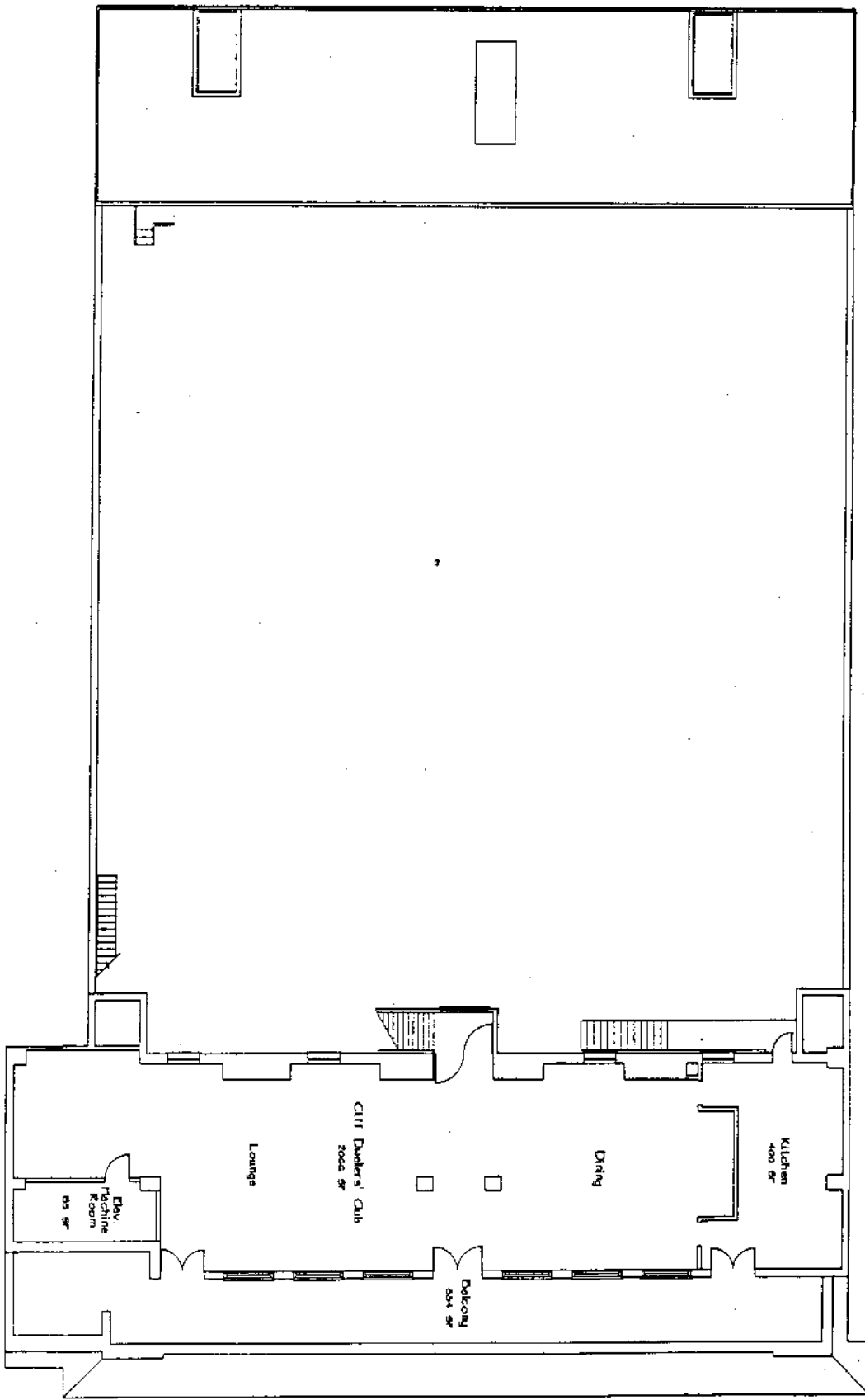


O R R C H E S T R A - H A L L



Architectural Floor Plan

O R C H E S T R A H A L L



0 2 4 8 16

INT. ARCH. TEL. ARCH. DIM. ARCH.

**ORCHESTRA HALL****Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.****SUMMARY**

Chicago, often characterized as Carl Sandburg's "Hog Butcher to the World" or "City of the Big Shoulders," became a city with well merited national and international reputations in the arts, architecture, literature, and science within barely 20 years of the disastrous 1871 fire that leveled much of the city. Among the cultural institutions that were part and parcel of this extraordinary cultural flowering was the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

During its first half century, under the leadership of only two conductors, both of major repute—Theodore Thomas (1891-1905) and Frederick August Stock (1905-18; 1919-42), the orchestra assumed and held a premier place in American music.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1940s, particularly under Fritz Reiner and George Solti, it has remained among the very first rank in the Nation. Orchestra Hall has been the Symphony's home since its construction in 1904-05 from a design by one of Chicago's and the Nation's major architects, Daniel Burnham.

Theodore Thomas and Walter Damrosch are often described as epic cultural figures, the most eminent conductors—and bitter competitors—of the late 19th century.<sup>2</sup> Both were in the first rank of the New York City musical world in the 1880s. Thomas also traveled extensively and had organized the Cincinnati music festivals that placed that city on the musical map. (These festivals took place in the Cincinnati Music Hall, a National Historic Landmark.) Thomas' efforts reached a low ebb in the late 1880s and he disbanded his personal orchestra in 1888. In 1891 he was invited to Chicago to head the new symphony orchestra. He quickly put the city on the musical map and by the early years of the new century was looking toward the erection of a permanent home for the orchestra. Thomas' friend, the nationally renowned architect Daniel Burnham, would oblige with the design.

Although not commonly regarded as significant in the history of architecture or as outstanding among Burnham's works, Orchestra Hall had intimate connections with him. Burnham was an ardent lifelong supporter of the orchestra and raised funds for construction of the hall, as well as donating his services.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas died only a few weeks after the hall opened in 1905. Frederick August Stock—like Thomas a German immigrant—stepped into his maestro's shoes on a temporary basis in 1905 when he was a mere 32 years old and was soon confirmed as permanent conductor. During his long tenure, the Orchestra won praise both for the quality of its performances and the

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<sup>1</sup> This summary discussion of the careers of Thomas and Stock is based on the sketches of their careers in John Tasker Howard, "Christian Friedrich Theodore Thomas," *Dictionary of American Biography* 18: 424-426, and Dana J. Epstein, "Frederick August Stock," *Dictionary of American Biography Supplement* 3: 740-742.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert Chase, *America's Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), p. 623.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas S. Hines, *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 227-230.

**ORCHESTRA HALL****Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

diversity of its repertoire. Stock also experimented; he staged a Mahler festival in 1917 and performed Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* long before it was played in New York.<sup>4</sup>

Both Thomas and Stock were great popularizers of orchestral music whose influence was particularly great in the Midwest and South. In addition to the high quality of their performances, their work can be said to have played an important role in making classical and symphonic music available to and influential on a far broader spectrum of the American population than would otherwise ever have experienced it. Orchestra Hall, which Thomas "built," and where Stock long reigned, is an historical monument to the role of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, its great conductors, and history of American music—and a testimony to the role of the city of Chicago in American cultural history.

### **HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

In the period between 1860 and 1920, institutional foundations of music were organized. This period saw the establishment of music conservatories, the addition of music to the curriculum in schools and universities, and the building of major concert halls across the country. These concert halls were built as a result of private fundraising and included the Philadelphia Academy of Music (1857), Cincinnati's Music Hall (1878), the Auditorium in Chicago (1889), and Carnegie Hall (1891) and the Metropolitan Opera House (1882), both in New York City. New York City quickly emerged as the performance center due to its large population and audience support; the first permanent orchestra had been established in that city in 1842.

Chicago's cultural institutions were firmly established in the late nineteenth century, around the time of the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893. Prior to 1893, professional and amateur artists performed in Chicago; the Musical Union, an amateur singing society, gave its first concert in 1857 and the city's first semi-professional orchestra, the Philharmonic Society, was founded in 1850.

Conductor Theodore Thomas first visited Chicago in 1869 with his newly formed Theodore Thomas Orchestra. Based in New York City, this musical troupe spent most of the year travelling. They visited Chicago frequently, performing at various halls and were always well received. In 1877 the Thomas Orchestra began a series of Summer Night Concerts at the Exposition Building on the lakefront. This series continued until 1891, when Thomas was offered a permanent orchestra in Chicago.

Theodore Thomas had absolute control over the new Chicago based orchestra; he had the right to create all musical programs without regard to box office receipts. The orchestra consisted of eighty-six men, forty-three of whom were Chicagoans. They performed twenty weeks each year, on Friday afternoons and Saturday evenings, in the new Auditorium building. The business affairs were handled by the Orchestral Association, formed to provide \$50,000 each year for the first three years in order to guarantee against box office losses. Thomas' new orchestra premiered October 16 and 17, 1891, performing works by Wagner, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Dvorak to a full house.

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<sup>4</sup> Epstein, *op. cit.*, p. 741.



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In 1893, Thomas was selected as the Director of the Bureau of Music of the World's Columbian Exposition. He persuaded a number of prominent musicians such as Anton Dvorak and Ignacy Jan Paderewski to appear with the Exposition Orchestra (the Chicago Orchestra augmented by 30 musicians). Unfortunately, after three months of poorly attended concerts, disagreements between Thomas and the fair's committee members led him to resign and the remaining concerts were conducted by concertmaster Max Bendix.

Nevertheless, Chicagoans continued to support Thomas' orchestra. By the 1896-97 season, Thomas felt they needed a smaller, more permanent concert hall. Sharing the Auditorium with others proved to be difficult when conflicts in engagement dates occurred. Furthermore, the orchestra rarely filled the large 4,500 seat Auditorium, and empty seats resulted in deficits and low morale.

At this time, the Orchestral Association was experiencing financial problems and was unable to support a new hall. By 1902, however, the Association's trustees concluded that a move to a smaller hall was the only solution to continuing financial difficulties. Bryan Lathrop, President of the Association, placed a deposit on property at 220 South Michigan Avenue and notified the Chicago newspapers that the Orchestra would be disbanded unless \$750,000 was raised for the construction of a new hall. Architect Daniel Hudson Burnham donated his time to design Orchestra Hall according to Theodore Thomas' specifications and construction began in May of 1904.

On December 14, 1904 the first concert in the new Orchestra Hall took place. Theodore Thomas conducted, and the program included works by Wagner, Strauss's "Death and Transfiguration," Beethoven's Symphony No. 5, and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's "Messiah." Thomas died less than a month after the inaugural concert, on January 4, 1905. As a result of his hard work in establishing a permanent orchestra in Chicago, the Orchestral Association renamed the orchestra the Theodore Thomas Orchestra.

Following Thomas' death, violinist Frederick Stock moved into the position of conductor. A member of the viola section since 1895-96, he occasionally aided Thomas by conducting out of town concerts and had been officially appointed Assistant Conductor by Thomas in 1899. With Thomas' death, the Orchestral Association was in chaos; Thomas had not only conducted the musicians, he also arranged tours and provided inspiration for the orchestra. The orchestra needed a strong personality in order to continue.

Stock was appointed acting conductor while The Orchestral Association searched for a suitable candidate. Various conductors were approached but none would accept the post. Meanwhile, Stock had become very popular with subscribers and the trustees voted to name Stock as Thomas's permanent successor in April of 1905, resulting in a unique instance of a conductor being chosen from the ranks of the orchestra.

The Theodore Thomas Orchestra continued its popularity under Stock. By 1909, Friday concerts were completely sold out, and other performances had good attendance. Stock frequently programmed works by Weber, Dvorak, Liszt, and Strauss, appealing to audience preferences. He also introduced the works of many contemporary composers to Chicago, including Schoenberg, Scriabin, Prokofiev, and Mahler. American composers in particular

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were championed by Stock who programmed no less than 321 works by 112 different "native and resident" composers during his tenure.

Stock led the Orchestra in a summer concert series at Ravinia Park, located 25 miles north of Chicago in Highland Park, beginning in 1906. Since the formation of the Ravinia Festival in 1936, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has performed annually as the resident orchestra. In 1913, the name of the Theodore Thomas Orchestra was changed to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Also at that time, the Orchestra began a popular concert series, performing works such as Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite," and other favored Wagner and Strauss works. By the 25th anniversary of the Orchestra in 1916, fifteen musicians had been members 25 years. Frederick Stock composed "Festival Prologue" especially for the silver anniversary celebration.

Following World War I, Stock began a series of Youth Concerts in order to educate young Chicagoans. He also organized the Civic Orchestra which served as a professional training orchestra. It opened with 54 students who studied using the scores of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

The 1940-41 season marked the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Stock commissioned several works in celebration, including Stravinsky's "Symphony in C," Roy Harris's "American Creed," Milhaud's "Symphony No. 1," Kodaly's "Concerto for Orchestra," Gliere's overture "Fete Ferghanaise," Casella's "Symphony No. 3," and Walton's "Scapino Overture." This season also marked Stock's 35th year as conductor. He died unexpectedly the following year, on October 20, 1942.

The Cliff Dwellers Club is housed in the ninth floor of Orchestra Hall. Founded in 1907 as an arts club by Chicago novelist Hamlin Garland and sculptor Lorado Taft and their friends Charles Francis Browne and Ralph Clarkson, it served as a meeting place for practicing artists. The name is from the novel *The Cliff Dwellers* by Chicagoan Henry B. Fuller. Prominent members included architects Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan and Dwight Perkins, writer George Ade, and conductor Frederick Stock. The Cliff Dwellers hosted informal concerts by members, and was visited by guest artists performing at Orchestra Hall.

Orchestra Hall has been host for an incredible variety of performances and presentations since its dedication in 1904. During the first 50 years, Orchestra Hall was the regular home of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as well as the Apollo Musical Club, the Mendelssohn Club of Chicago, the Chicago Business Men's Symphony, the Commonwealth Edison Orchestra, and the Marshall Field Choral Society. Mayors Harold Washington and Richard M. Daley, Jr., were both inaugurated during ceremonies held at Orchestra Hall. In addition, the hall has hosted countless travel lectures, movies, commencement ceremonies, religious services, visiting orchestras from all over the world, and other performing groups including choirs and dance companies.

The Allied Arts series, which began in 1928, has brought to Orchestra Hall the most celebrated solo performers in the world. These artists have included Vladimir Horowitz, Myra Hess, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Jascha Heifetz, Fritz Kreisler, Jacqueline du Pre, Leontyne Price, Beverly Sills, Robert Merrill, Jussi Bjoerling, Rosa Ponselle, Marian Anderson, Kirsten Flagstad, John McCormack, Benny Goodman, and Andres Segovia.

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Daniel Barenboim, the current Music Director, made his Orchestra Hall piano recital debut in an Allied Arts concert at the age of 15 in January of 1958.

Many composers have appeared as guest conductors and/or soloists with the orchestra, including Richard Strauss, Sergei Prokofiev, Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, Aaron Copland, and Leonard Bernstein.

Between 1943 and 1953, Desire Defauw, Artur Rodzinski, and Rafael Kubelik prepared the way for Fritz Reiner, whose passion for perfection established the modern-day Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In 1957 Reiner invited Margaret Hillis to establish the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the first chorus affiliated with an American orchestra. This vocal ensemble has participated in 11 of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's 46 Grammy winning recordings.

Since 1943, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has continued its practice of performing the world premieres of music by American composers, including Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, William Grant Still, Roy Harris, George Crumb, Jacob Druckman, David Del Tredici, Morton Gould, and John Corigliano.

In 1969, following the tenure of Music Director Jean Martinon, Sir Georg Solti became the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's eighth Music Director. The Orchestra's current preeminence is due in large measure to Solti, who, through tours and records, showed the world what Chicagoans had known all along: that there was an extraordinary orchestra in America's heartland. Maestro Solti has won 31 Grammy Awards (24 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra)—more than any other recording artist in any musical category. The Solti/Chicago Symphony Orchestra combination has sold more than 5 million records. On December 5, 1993, president Clinton bestowed the Kennedy Center Honor on Sir Georg Solti in recognition of his contribution to the arts in America. At the close of the 1990-91 season—the Orchestra's centennial season—Maestro Solti passed his baton to Daniel Barenboim, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's ninth Music Director. Maestro Barenboim has earned a world-wide reputation as both a pianist and conductor.

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES****Primary Sources:**

The chief repository of documents on Orchestra Hall and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Archives, founded in 1990 during the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's centennial. The collection includes all audio-visual materials, programs, photographs, and institutional records documenting the activities of the CSO and other events held at Orchestra Hall, along with architectural documentation on the construction and alterations of Orchestra Hall. Of particular interest is "Orchestra Hall: A Chronicle of Its Architecture and Acoustics" prepared for the Orchestral Association by the architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, October 1980.

The Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois, houses the Theodore Thomas papers, and a wide range of secondary sources in music history and theory.

The Art Institute of Chicago houses the Daniel H. Burnham papers which include correspondence between Burnham and Theodore Thomas, Rose Fay Thomas, and Frederick Stock. Of particular interest is microfilm roll #20 "D.H. Burnham and Co., Orchestra Hall, 1905."

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.  
 Previously Listed in the National Register. [PART OF HISTORIC DISTRICT]  
 Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.  
 Designated a National Historic Landmark.  
 Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #  
 Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: #

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**Primary Location of Additional Data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State Agency  
 Federal Agency  
 Local Government  
 University  
 Other (Specify Repository): Chicago Symphony Orchestra Archives  
Newberry Library, Chicago  
Art Institute of Chicago

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing  
A 16 448160 4636280

**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The nominated property is identified with the city of Chicago Index Number 17-15-105-014.

**Boundary Justification:**

The boundary is that which has historically been associated with the property. Chicago identifies each parcel with an Index Number for the purpose of tax identification. The Index number is the most accurate way to identify a single structure within the city boundaries.

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Date: January 5, 1994

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered MAR 21 1978

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Orchestra Hall	Chicago Cook County

Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy  
Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson  
Hon. Cardiss Collins

**COPY OF CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION**